



THE

## KNIGHT



Vol. III No. 1 Issue #13. THE LITHUANIAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

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\$1.50

## C.I.C.F. BIG SUCCESS

It was a Lithuanian weekend for sure at the Chicago International Coin Fair held May 30,-June 1 in Chicago. In addition to this editor and the director of the L.N.A.; flying in for the meeting and socializing were: Vince & Agnes Alones (N.Y.), Joe Adomaitis (CT), David T. Alexander (OH), Courtney Coffing (OH), Russel Hibbs (KY), Jonas Augustinius (IL), Stanley Balzekas, Jr. (IL), Don Hiltunen (MICH), Art & Helen Blase (IL) and Henry Brazul (OR). That's 14 people at the meeting on Sunday afternoon, even more than the OIN had at their meeting! Also attending on Saturday were Mr. & Mrs. Kazimier Wysocki, of N.J., LNA members, and Edward Mikutis, of Illinois.

All weekend long, we were meeting with Lithuanian collectors, and touring the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture: in addition to eating out and sampling food at Lithuanian restaurants in the Marquette Park district of Chicago "Little Lithuania."

At the meeting on Sunday, Joseph Adomaitis gave his talk on grading Lithuanian modern coins, and Frank Passic presented a slide presentation entitled "Lithuanian Subway Tokens." A special presentation was made to Coin World's David T. Alexander, for his support of the L.N.A. and his articles in CW which have resulted in numerous new members to the L.N.A. Alexander was presented with the 1930 Vytautas the Great ribbon/badge which was made in Chicago of that year.

In addition, there were more "discoveries" at the show, and between all the Lithuanian collectors, the dealers were just about sold out of anything Lithuanian by the time the show ended....

Some items obtained by various LNA members were: LNA 3b 10 Centy REVERSE uniface test strike (1st one reported), LNA 5b 50 centy uniface REVERSE (1st one reported); LNA 14.1 1938 10 Litu defaced by communists; a 1936-38 10 Litu BLANK unstruck planchet with a beautiful lettered edge!; German cigarette cards of Richard Greiling firm in Dresden, featuring foil-like rubbings of Lithuanian coins; German occupation WWII 5 Punktai note; 1 punktai with serial no., and a punktai ration card from 1943-44.

## BEAUTIFUL GLOSSY COLOR PHOTO OF 1938 NOTE AVAILABLE FROM L.N.A.

As part of our special feature on the rare 1938 10 Litu PAVYZDYS banknote, we are happy to announce that we have obtained a color slide of this note from the Swedish Museum in Stockholm (the actual Flatbarzdis note), and will have beautiful color glossy actual size photoes made of them. We are printing a limited amount, and offer them to LNA members only at a cost of 10.00 each (includes both sides).

Most of us will never even see, let alone own this note, and this photo of it (VERY BEAUTIFUL) is the next best thing to owning the note itself. We printed 10 in a trial run to see how they would look: John Glynn of England commented he stared at his for an hour when he got it in the mail; Jonas K. Karys (who does not own one) is putting it in his permanent collection; World Coin News editor Russ Rulau commented at CICF that he would like to place one of these beautiful photos in a frame and hang it on the wall. This is a one time offer; that way we will know how many to print. Orders must be received by August 15. This picture is the same note that is illustrated in Flatbarzdis books and articles. Satisfaction guaranteed! (This editor suggests ordering a few extra because you are going to have people want them: it happened to me.)

## RESEARCH PROJECT BEGINS

With this and the next issue we are presenting a research interlude of two items which we've been trying to make room for for quite some time. The first is a critique of Dr. Račkus' writings, in a letter to the Balzekas Museum, written in 1968 by Jonas K. Karys and published in Lithuanian in his 1970 Numizmatika book. We've also added a picture of Dr. Račkus and his biography from the Encyclopedia Lituanica. The second item is the London Mint records of 1925, recording the specifics for Lithuania's 3 silver coin of 1925.

We have switched to a neater standard-sized format, and so the pages can be easily punched and placed in a standard sized notebook. This will be our size policy from now on, and so future projects will bear the same format.

## THE KNIGHT Volume III No. 1, Issue #13. The

official publication of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association, P.O. Box 612, Columbia, Maryland 21045. Frank Passic, Albion, Michigan, EDITOR. Robert J. Douchis, Baltimore, Maryland, DIRECTOR. Subscription a donation of \$8 or more for 6 bi-monthly issues, in U.S. & Canada. Overseas, \$10.

# HISTORY OF THE RARE AND BEAUTIFUL 1938 10 LITU COMMEMORATIVE BANKNOTE

By Frank Passic  
Albion, Michigan

[Continued from last issue...]

Saliamonas Banaitis (1866-1933) was the founder of the first Lith. printing shop in Kaunas in 1905. During the course of years, he published over 1 1/2 million books and 2 million periodicals in total. His work as a printer contributed much in developing national consciousness up to WWI.

Petras Klimas (1891-1969) served as sec. of the presidium of the Council. He also served later as a diplomat. He is best known for his scholarly writings, about the Czarist Russian rule, and about the Polish occupation of Vilnius.

Aleksandras Stulginskis (1885-1969) served as Lithuania's 2nd president 1920-26. Under his rule, Lith. gained worldwide diplomatic recognition, and the monetary unit, the litas, was established.

Jokūbas Šernas (188-1926) was one of the Council's organizers in 1917, and later served as a member of the Interior Ministry, as well as a director of the Commerce and Industry bank.

Pranas Dovydaitis (1866-1942) was a well-known educator & scholar who was expelled under the Czar for participating in a student strike. He was the editor of the publication Viltis. (Hope).

The photo of the Council on the reverse was intended to remind the Lithuanian nation, and the world, of the great decision that was made by them in 1918.

Above the Council is imposed the coat-of-arms, or emblems of Lithuania's 3 most important cities: Klaipėda, Vilnius, Kaunas. The placement of these arms is often misinterpreted and misunderstood. Aleksandrs Platbarzdis comments, "The possible curtain of 1918 would hardly have been decorated that way. At least they had neither reason nor the right to place the arms of Klaipėda there, because that city with its surroundings became part of Lithuania only in 1923." (sic)

To answer the critic, first of all, the arms were not part of the original picture, although the curtain was present. Secondly, this same combination of arms also appears on the 1922 50 Litu note (which by the way was also before Klaipėda was re-joined) and on the 500 lit note. Relatedly, scenes of the capital city Vilnius appear on the 50 lit notes of 1922, 1928, despite being under Polish occupation after 1920.

Throughout the centuries, Lithuania has been occupied either all or in part by various foreign powers; mainly: Germany, Poland, and Russia. Whether or not a particular city or region was occupied or not, Lithuanian territory was still Lithuania to Lithuanians, no matter who the rulers were. The artificial boundaries imposed upon it by

oppressors made no difference: the people knew their cities and territory. Thus, the inscription "VILNIUS, February 16, 1918" around the arms of Vilnius served as a reminder to the world as to whose capital the city was, even though it did not fall back into Lithuanian control until Poland was defeated in 1939.

The reverse is green in color. The numeral "10" appears in each corner, decorated by beautiful folk-motifs. The text is standard, "Bank of Lithuania, Ten Lits" (translated). A red PAVYZDYS is fortunately placed near the bottom, and does not interfere with the photo of the Council. Under it is the standard text which translates, "Counterfeiting of Banknotes is Punishable by Law."

Printers specimens are also known to exist. These do not bear any serial number, but instead a round seal of Bradbury Wilkinson & Co, and a small round punched out hole in the note.

Why was the 1938 10 Litu note never placed in circulation, and is only known as a specimen? What happened to the circulation issue? Until the 1950's the very existence of this note was unknown to the western world, although Jonas K. Karys in his 1953 book gave a brief hint: "... Artist Adomas Galdikas is said to have drawn another 10 Lit project, but no further news has reached us about its eventual fate." Actually, some were here in the U.S. and Canada with former bank officials, but unknown to numismatists.

In 1955 Aleksandrs Platbarzdis (noted Latvian numismatist whose name translates to mean, "wide-beard...") made numismatic history with his article in the October No. 8 issue of the Nordisk Numismatic Unions Medlemsblad (read it in The Knight Vol. 1 No. 6 Pg. 4) In this he announced and illustrated the 1938 note.

Its origin, quite naturally, was shrouded with mystery. Many questions had to be answered. In 1979, this author was able to uncover some valuable information which had not been known before.

In 1938, the printers had sent a limited number (40-50) of the PAVYZDYS notes, to the Bank of Lithuania for their approval, before the regular circulation printing began. (at the end of 1938, as their records showed).

Kazimieras Serepeka, an employee of the B of L since 1922, served as Secretary of Foreign Exchange Control in 1939. In October of 1939, after the war had started (Sept '39), the Board of Directors of the Bank asked him if he would travel to New Malden, England, to pick up a shipment of newly printed banknotes that were still in England. He would have to travel via Stockholm, in a dangerous journey, as Hitler was already gaining much of Europe. Keep in mind that in March of 1938 Poland threatened Lithuania with invasion; and after that crisis passed, Germany began pressure to get Klaipėda back, which it finally did in March of 1939. It was not the time to be shipping valuable banknotes across Europe.

Serepeka made the decision, YES. However, the Directors changed their mind and told him that the trip would be too dangerous after all.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

# 14.1 DEFACED 1938 10 LIT SMETONA COIN

With this month marking the unfortunate 40th anniversary of the invasion of Lithuania by the USSR, it is most appropriate for us to feature the coin most affected by that invasion: the 1938 10 Litu commemorative.

Historical Background: "When the Russian Army occupied Lithuania...Moscow ordered destroyed every item with a portrait of President Smetona. June 19th, people were ordered to turn those coins in within one week's time to the bank, or post office, or police. Rumors were circulating that if such a coin would be found in possession of anybody, there might be a death penalty. Frightened people stood in line at designated places to deliver those "capitalistic" coins....Naive Russians wanted to erase the name of that great President of Lithuania from pages of history." (ALPS June 1948, pg. 20. J.Yunkis)

Since the Russians kept Lithuania on the litas standard even after the invasion, they had to figure out how to take care of the 1938 Independence-Smetona commemorative coin.

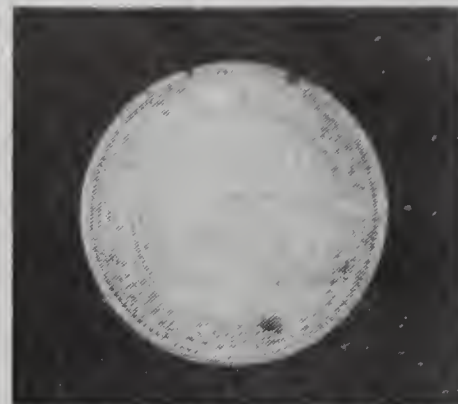
Although they were all later melted, for a while, a plan was worked out where they were defaced, probably with a lathe, and placed back into circulation! One side is a fine-lined type of defacing, the other thick. We at the LNA are giving this coin the number of 14.1: since it WAS circulated in Lithuania in 1940. In my trip to Lithuania, this defaced piece was shown to me and confirmed. The one pictured in this photo is the property of an LNA member who purchased it here in the U.S.

The 1938 coins are scarce already, with these defaced ones being too, and we have no "track record" of them being offered for sale on the market. However, this piece is a valid and necessary part of any modern Lithuanian coin collection, as it was circulated like this.

This coin is a grim reminder of the events of June of 1940, and of how the Russians destroyed the freedom of the Lithuanian people.

**FOR SALE:** Complete set of regular Y1-14 Lithuanian coins (14 coins) in old black-type Capital Plastic holder. VF-XF average. \$185.00. Own a piece of the Fatherland! The following Lith coins in AU-UNC (all have luster): Y-2 1925 5ct \$19; Y-8 1925 5 litai \$40; Y-9 '36 1c \$10; Y-11 '36 5c \$18; Y-12 '36 5 litai sharp strike Vytis \$22. The following CURRENCY: P-27 1930 20 Litu VG \$12. Ukraine: P-R369a 100 gr. 1918 XF \$25; P-R371 1,000 Griven 1918 VF+ \$20. Poland: P-58 500 Zlt. 1919 XF (watermark of Kosciuszko) \$30; Latvia: P-R3a 1919 5 rubles XF \$6; Germany: Litzmannstadt camp 1940 20 marks AU \$15. Frank Passic, 900 S. Eaton St. Albion, Michigan 49224.

Want/for sale ads are free to all LNA members. WRITE!



LITHUANIAN or Polish collector? Price list available. Please send stamp. Also interested in buying medieval coins of Lithuania/Poland. Bruce Donahue, Eagle Coins, P.O. Box 92, Accord, Mass 02018 (Paid Adv.)

## ADDRESSES

We'd like to take time here to let you be aware of some numismatic & Lit. organizations that are good to belong to. When writing, mention the LNA.

**WORLD COIN NEWS.** Weekly newspaper dealing in world coins & Currency. Lith. items frequently are offered for sale by dealers. \$11.50 yr (we owe our existence to WCN) Krause Publications, Iola, Wisconsin, 54945

**COIN WORLD** Weekly coin publication dealing in the entire scope of numismatics, including world. \$18 yr. Write: P.O. Box 150, Sidney, Ohio 45367.

**BRIDGES:** Lith-American newsletter. Keeps you informed as to what's going on concerning Lithuanians. \$3 per year (a bargain!) for 12 monthly issues. Bridges, c/o J. Jankus, 84-55 86th ave, Woodhaven, N.Y. 11421.

**BALZEKAS MUSEUM OF LITHUANIAN CULTURE.** Offers membership for \$15 per year, receive monthly educational museum review, privileges, etc. Gift shop features many Lith coins, etc. (address elsewhere)

**INTERNATIONAL BANK NOTE SOCIETY:** Publishes IBNS JOURNAL, of which our LNA member John Glynn is Vice-President, and Ruth Hill, President! Excellent articles in Journal dealing with banknotes, some even Lithuanian & related! Write: IBNS c/o Milan Alusic, 4910 Biscane Ave #13, Racine, Wisconsin 53406

**AMERICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION.** The big national coin organization. Many advantages, including Library loan by mail (excellent for research), Collection Insurance at group rates, certification service to authenticate and grade coins, the monthly magazine The Numismatist, and more. Write: A.N.A. P.O. Box 2366, Colorado Springs, Colorado. If you wish to join, send your application to me to co-sponsor you before sending it to ANA.

**BALTIC ASSOCIATES.** Offers Lithuanian T-shirts, Bumper-stickers, decals, books, records, amber, plaques, dolls, belts, plates, clothing, flags, games, etc. Write: P.O. Box 8248, Boston, Mass. 02114.

In December, Serepeka inquired as to what the Bank had decided. He was told the the R of L had entered into contract with a firm in Latvia (presumably Riga) to pick up the notes. From this we learn 1) the circulation notes were printed, and 2) the bank of Lithuania made a valiant attempt to issue and circulate this historic banknote!

The letter the printers had written to Flatbarzdis in 1954 implied that the entire issue of circulation notes had been shipped to Lith, although according to what we know now, just the PAVYZDYS notes reached Lithuania. If the circulation issue was still in England after the war, it would have been reported by that company. Of course, they were bombed out (as was the Lith legation there), and it is possible the notes were destroyed in that manner.

But the printers letter strongly implies the circulation issue being shipped out of England. Latvian legation diplomat Vlademars Kreicbergs in a letter (1979) to this author theorized that the transport firm might be the Thomas Cook & Son, which had a branch office in Riga. Whether this was the case is unknown, since records of that firm (in a letter to this author) are too gone. Whatever the case, the 1938 10 Litu was not circulated in Lithuania, as on June 15, 1940 the USSR invaded the Baltic States.

With the knowledge we now have, there are 3 major possibilities as to the fate of the circulation issue: 1) the notes were in Riga, awaiting instructions for pick-up; 2) They arrived in Lithuania too late and too close to the troubled events in May-June 1940 to be released, and 3) they were shipped by boat aboard a merchant ship in the Baltic Sea, and sunk by the Germans, in an act of war, and thus the notes were "delivered" to the bottom of the Baltic sea! It is this author's belief that this latter possibility is probably close to the truth. It has been reported that there were merchant ships travelling to the Baltic countries 1939-40 that were "accidentally" destroyed by the Germans. Thus, among Lithuania's 3 enemies, it appears that the Germans were the "winners" in destroying this note which was so despised (or would have been) by these foes. Germany would hate the Declaration and Klaipėda arms on it; Russia the whole thing; Poland, the references to Vilnius, the capital city.

If the regular circulation notes did reach either Latvia or Lithuania in time, they would have been an instant target, since they bore the outlawed portrait of Smetona. But this author thinks the communists never had that chance.

How many 1938 notes are known to exist today? In this author's trip to occupied-Lithuania last year, it was learned that there are 17 confirmed notes in underground collections, with just a very few accidentally circulated during the war. A dozen or so have made their way to the west through the years, including the one by Flatbarzdis which

is now in the Swedish museum in Stockholm, of which the LNA is offering to members a beautiful color reproduction. Two confirmed notes were brought to the U.S. and Canada by former bank officials after the war, but these remained unknown in numismatic circles. One was sold several years ago to an LNA member in the east, who still owns it.

Unfortunately, even this author has been unable to secure one for his own collection, and still searches, like many other Lithuanian collectors. However, the color photo of it is the next best thing to owning the note itself, and until any of us are fortunate to get one, the photo is the next best thing.

In summary, the 1938 10 Litu is a graphic reminder to the world of Lithuania's plea for freedom, and its desire for political and territorial integrity. It is a permanent record of the events of 1918 which speak to us today: that the Lithuanian people made their decision for independence, and that decision should be respected by all nations.

## WANT-SALE ADS

WANTED: Medieval Lithuanian, Riga, Livonia, and Courland coins. Will purchase outright or trade my U.S. silver coins. Ray Hafsaas, P.O. box 963, Vashon, Washington 98070.

LITHUANIAN STAMPS: For your foreign. My 2 for your 3, 3 for 5, etc., or what do you have? Many trades. Peter Shulin, 645 Hayes Ave, Washington, Pennsylvania 15301.

FOR SALE: The following Lithuanian Currency:

|                                   |                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| P-7 1 centas AU \$18.50, UNC \$20 | these all          |
| P-8 2 centu UNC \$25              | "permanent" notes  |
| P-10 10 Centu UNC \$25            | of 1922            |
| P-11 20 Centu VF \$18             |                    |
| P-13 1 Litas (scarce)             | F \$25             |
| P-14 2 Litu (very scarce) VG \$25 |                    |
| P-23 10 Litu, 1927. XF \$35       |                    |
| P-25 100 Litu, 1928 F+ \$35       |                    |
| P-27 20 Litu 1930 soiled F \$20   |                    |
| Ost-Money:                        |                    |
| P-R120 20 kopeken F \$4           | Robert J. Douchis  |
| P-R121 50 kopeken VF \$5          | P.O. Box 612       |
| P-R122 1 Rubel VF+ \$9.50         | Columbia, MD 21045 |
| P-R132 50 Marks XF \$27           |                    |

*DID YOU FORGET TO RENEW?*

|                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>LITHUANIAN</b>  |                                                                                                   |
| <b>NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION</b>                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |
| Member                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                   |
| YOUR NAME HERE _____ No _____                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |
| 80-81<br>Year                                                                                                                                                                                 | <br>Director |

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW By your editor.

This issue marks the start of our 3rd year. In our short duration of existence we've together been learning much about the history of Lithuanian numismatics. Here are some of the highlights in our speciality which have occurred in the past year:

**ARTICLES:** Coin World Victor David Brenner issue 9/26/'79, focused on his Lithuanian origin at Šiauliai. 3/26/'80 article on our Lith. mintages. 5/28/80 focused upon Lith. museum; 6/18/80 reported on CICF, with pictures of Vince Alones, Stanley Balzekas, Jr, Frank Passic, and Dave Alexander.

**World Coin News:** "Lithuanians...Vilnius" restoration anniversary article 12/18/79; "Memel's 1st Note" 12/25/79; "Brenner, not Baranauskas," 9/18/79; 5/20/80, big report on Museum & Chicago tokens.

**IBNS Journal:** Just published in the latest Vol 18 No. 4 is article "The Lithuanian DP Camp Money of Scheinfeld", giving a complete description and history of this set of 3 notes.

**DISCOVERIES:** In addition to those mentioned on page 1, the "Litauen" Punktė notes of WWII; a 2nd known example of 1938 2 litai pattern 16b Columns reverse with lettered edge (still not listed in Krause...) sells for \$650; 10 Litų note located in Sweden, LNA receives color slide. Relatedly, the mystery behind this note unfolds; Vytautas the Great Aluminum medals discovered in Balzekas Museum, offered to collectors (now sold out); the complete set of the Chicago, Philadelphia & Brooklyn lodge tokens is discovered in a closet at the Balzekas Museum; placed on exhibit at the CICF for the first time, now on permanent exhibit at the museum.

A grateful thanks to World Coin News and Coin World: through their publicity, we received numerous inquiries, and gained members.

Our major goal this year is to prepare and introduce ourselves to the almost exhaustless field of medieval Lithuanian numismatics. We've been studying some superb Polish and Lithuanian numismatic references (Karys, Hutten-Czapski, Kopicki, etc...) and in two issues will announce a most major project regarding this era.

In addition, we plan to continue to acquaint you (and us) with an array of Lith. numismatic and military items, to provide a fascinating variety which we hope will attract new members, and at the same time give all of us an education which is far worth the \$8 membership fee.

We are always in need of reference material and information to add to our files. If you have clippings of Lith. numismatic articles, etc, PLEASE send a copy to us. Because of your help, we've been already able to present to you several.

If you haven't renewed, please do so today, as this will be your last issue if you don't. This is going to be a very education year (wait till you see the project we have planned), and anyone interested in medieval Lithuanian and its related Polish and Russian numismatics will by all means want to subscribe. We have leaflets to gain new members printed up. write.

A big thanks to Val Matelis for his superb translation work, and we now welcome Aleksandras Radžius, Jr. of Baltimore, Maryland who has been translating articles for us. Sincerely, your editor: *Frank Passic*

# HOARD FOUND

5.

A hoard of Lithuanian religious pendants bearing the likeness of Lithuanian Saint Casimir was discovered by Vince Alones, while cataloging military decorations at the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian culture. These small apparently pewter (?) pendants bear the inscription in Lithuanian language: "ST. CASIMIR, PRAY FOR US." The museum has decided to offer them for sale to collectors for \$10 each. SUPPLY LIMITED!

In another development, the Museum is just about completely sold out of the official Lithuanian modern coin holders, which we had a part in, and originally 100 were manufactured. In the past year, they have sold very quickly. Only a few are left. Anyone wishing one should order now, before they are sold out. \$19.95.

Write: Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, 4012 Archer Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60632.

## WHOOOPS!

The photo of last month's token of the month came out very Light: we are re-printing a better photo of it so you can see what it looks like.

Also, in the article about the 1938 note, we listed twice the name of Juozas Paknys. Actually, the second one (Pg. 4) is of Zigmās Starkus, who died in the Gary concentration camp in 1944. Sorry for the misprint.



## LETTERS

I wish the Knight would consider broadening its coverage to Latvia. This brother Baltic nation has so many ties: historically, geographically, linguistically, and racially, that it seems difficult to believe that Lithuanians neglect it so.---Ray Hafsaas, Vashon, Washington.

NOTE: In our 2 ye. existence, we've been cramming as much as we could into T.K. and haven't gotten even a quarter of the way into the Lith. material. We wonder, if there already is not some type of Latvian numis. org. in existence. If there is, let us know and we'll be more than happy to spread the news! Primarily, however, this is a Lith. group, but occasionally we will touch upon Latvia.

6 The following article is taken from the Cleveland, Ohio Lithuanian newspaper "DIRVA" (The Field) September 14, 1978, No. 36-5, and translated into the English language for the LNA by member A. Radžius, Jr.

## PLAYING WITH NUMISMATIC RIDDLES

By Juratė Statutė De Rosales [Obviously a Lithuanian woman married to a Latin-American.]

In Caracas Venezuela, Joseph Menkeliūnas, a Lithuanian merchant, pressed into my hand a 1767 coin he owns. The coin is quite large, markedly larger than a current half dollar. One side is silver and on it we see the complicated coat of arms of the Saxon electorate, which I do not understand well enough to decipher, but Menkeliūnas called the heraldic bird "chickens." In the widespread Lithuanian habit, they tend to call all heraldic eagles "chickens." [All of the enemy neighbors of Lithuania: Russia, Prussia, Poland, etc. had eagles on their coat of arms, neither any of them were friendly birds...] He even showed me a couple of those "chickens" on the coin. Around the arms circle an inscription, "ELECTORATUS SAXONIAE ADMINISTRATOR 1767 x EINE MARCKE."

The other side of the coin is markedly stranger, because 1) it is gold plated, and 2) on it is found the following inscription: "XAVERIUS D.G. REG. PR. POL. & LITH. DUX. SAX." (Xavior Through God's Grace, King of Prussia, Poland, and Lithuania, Duke of Saxony.)

Why should someone goldplate one side of a silver coin and leave the other side untouched? Why should that Duke Xaver who, as is known, never ruled neither Prussia, nor Poland, nor Lithuania, call himself the king of Prussia, Poland, and Lithuania?

### A REMNANT OF CZAR NICHOLAS' SCATTERED COLLECTION?

To my first question answers Menkeliūnas himself. The coin he traded a couple of years ago from an old goldminer, who claimed to have worked in his youth in Czar Nicholas' gold works. The old man related that the Czar had a great coin collection, which was on permanent display in one of his palace halls. The older copper and silver coins were gold plated in the Czar's shops and displayed in the palace so that viewers saw only the gold plated side: for the greater glory of the Czar and greater pleasure of the viewers, or maybe in a calculated attempt to fool western ambassadors...

The collection was scattered all over the world, but the old method of plating one side of the coins helps to identify the coins of the Czar's "painted" coin collection.

Was the old man telling the truth? On examining the Menkeliūnas coin with special glasses, it was clear that the plating was not done by a galvanized method, but rather by a much older hand plating method. The gold plate on one side is rather thick, and not uniformly thick. Looking through a magnifying glass, one sees blisters and unevenness.

### "SELF-MADE KING OF LITHUANIA"

More complicated is the question why Xavor of Saxony called himself King of Prussia, Poland, and Lithuania. Here I can only give a couple of guesses and leave further explanations to persons more familiar with Lithuanian history during the 18th century period.

First, it's necessary to look at the date of the coin: 1767. The coin was issued after the election of Stanislaus Poniatovskis as King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. And before the 1st partition of Poland-Lithuania, which took place in 1772.

Before Stanislaus Poniatovskis, two Saxon Dukes in a row ruled Poland and Lithuania: August II Saxon and August III Saxon. However, when August III died, the next king elected was not the next Saxon Duke, but Russian Czarina Catherine's protegee Čartoriski family candidate Poniatovskis.

The rulers of Saxony, obviously could not agree with such an election. They were electors with the rights of electors, i.e. Saxons was an electorate having the right to cast its ballot in the elections of the German (Holy Roman) emperor. To renounce the title "king" and remain a mere elector was not pleasant. The new elector was probably tempted to pronounce himself the "rightful" heir to the crown of August II and August III.



[The coin being discussed is a 1 Thaler (Convention) of Xaver (1763-1768), Prince Regent of Saxony. the coin is listed as Craig #78 in Krause, with a value of \$40 in VF, \$125 in XF, and \$225 in UNC for a regular coin]

The Saxon pretensions to the Polish crown may explain the inscription on the coin "REG. POL.", but that still leaves unexplained "REG. LITH." concept, since Lithuania at that time was not a kingdom, but a Grand Dukedom.

On the other hand, Prussia at that time was a powerful state, which not only did not belong to the Saxon electorate, but quite the reverse, about 30 years later annexed Saxon lands. So how do you explain such an "ex abruptd," as Saxony's Hercog's sudden titlization as King of Prussia?

Maybe the issuance of the coin has something to do with the bar confederate uprising, which took place in Lithuania and Poland in the year 1768 and which the Russians put down?

Continued on page 8...

In a word, the above presented possibilities can only be question marks and guesses, which cannot be converted to fact until there is historical verification. Maybe someone of the readers can present the answer to this numismatic riddle?

Our translator, A. Radžius, Jr. has investigated this, and brings to us a portion translated from "Lietuvos Istorija" by A. Šapoka, Pg. 408:

Relations between the King (Poniatovskis) 1768-1795 & Russia....Previously Russia did everything through the Cartoriski's (Czartoryski), from now repnine and his successors did everything by themselves. They became the real rulers, and the king just fulfilled their will. To remove the king, which was what the nobles joining the confederation wanted, Russia did not want: another King who would be so dependent on her and so bend before her, could not be found. He was just instructed, it was shown to him, that, by disobeying Russia, he could loose everything. At the same time, he truly desired to improve the well-being of his country. He was quite enlightened and understood the affairs of state, but he lacked the energy to rule, had no will; he was too pre-occupied with personal pleasures, literature, art. Seeing the might of Russia, Poniatovskis thought it unwise to resist her. Depending on Catherine's former love for him (Poniatovskis was Catherine's lover before being elected King) he trusted, that she would let him rule his country. Thus, even during this congress (1768) he did not dare resist the repnine, everywhere he submitted before him, and or Catherine, he just begged her not to ruin his country. When the congress finally ended, not intending to resist Russia, he prepared to rule the country, and accomidating repnine; the Cartorisky's were pushed out of the political limelight.

The same people, who joined together in 1767 to remove the king, rose to resist the highanded repression of repnine. Since the king supported Russia, the resistance was also directed against him. This movement started while repnine was still manipulating the congress--the same 1768 year in the city of Bar.

...The nobles united in a Confederation to fight Russian influence and to restore the old rights of the nobles.

...Even though many of the Confederates were enemies of the king, they initially didn't declar a fight against him.

...The main forces of the Confederates were scattered, leaders had left the country, but all over the land partizan groups in the land remained. Not only that, the Conf-

ederation began receiving help: At this time Russia declared was on Turkey; France and Austria supported the Confederates.

....France even gave money and sent military advisors, their chief was to become renounded during the French Revolution, General Dumouriez

....The King was considering joining the confederation, as his army would no longer fight against the Confederation. But at the same time the confederation declared itself not recognizing the king and calling for his removal. They thought, that declaring the throne of the Republic Vacant, all the countries which desired to seat their candidate on the throne will come to their aid. [translators note: I think our Duke Xaver of Saxony was anticipating this and planning.] But it turned out differently. There were not many competitors for the throne.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES From "The Numismatist" (A.N.A.)

SEPTEMBER, 1923.

Pg. 413

### THE NEW CURRENCY OF LITHUANIA.

The following report upon the currency of Lithuania, from an official source, was read at the July meeting of the New York Numismatic Club:

The Chairman of the Constituent Assembly of Lithuania, in the capacity of Acting President of the Republic, proclaims the following, enacted on the 9th day of August, 1922, by the Constituent Assembly:

#### Law of Monetary Unit.

1. The monetary system of the Republic of Lithuania shall be the gold standard. The monetary unit shall be the litas. The litas shall contain 0.150,462 grammes of pure gold; it shall be made up of 100 cents.

2. The date of the introduction of this monetary unit shall be announced by the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Industry.

3. The currencies circulating in Lithuania--the Ostmark, Ostrouble, as well as the German Reichsmark--shall be exchanged into litas within the period of three months, beginning from the day of introduction of the monetary unit, at the rate fixed weekly, or oftener, by the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Industry.

4. After the introduction of the litas the performance of all acts, documents, debt and promissory notes, deposits, various agreements, payment and settlement of accounts shall be carried on in litas. Documents and acts, which have been made in Ostmarks, Ostroubles, or in other currency, previous to the introduction of litas, shall be executed in litas if one of the parties concerned should so demand. The rate of exchange for the other currencies shall be subject to regulation by the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Industry.

5. This law shall be executed by the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Industry.

A. STULGINSKIS,

Chairman of the Constituent Assembly and Acting President of the Republic.

GALVANAUSKAS, Prime Minister.

Kaunas, August 16, 1922.

THE NUMISMATIST, August, 1937

723

#### NEW OR RECENT ISSUES.

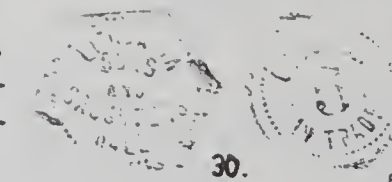


Lithuania Silver ten litas, dated 1936, with portrait of Vytautas the Great, who ruled Lithuania in the early fifteenth century, extended his rule and influence over the greatest territory, adopted Christianity and defeated the armies of the Crusading Knights, the Brothers of the Sword and the Teutonic Knights in the great battle of Tannenberg. The knight on the reverse, "the Lithuanian Rider," is said to have been used in the coat-of arms of this country since the twelfth century.

# 8 CHICAGO LODGE TOKENS

By the late Dr. Alexander M. Račkus, continued...

Crenated planchet, 8 petals, 25 X 30 mm. Bronze. Inscription stands for: "MOTERŲ DRAUGISTE SZVENTO PAMOKS MARIJOS AUSZROS VARTUOSE," which translates, "Women's Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Dawn Gate." Rev: Inscription, "GOOD FOR 5 cents IN TRADE," surrounded by a dotted border. The numeral "5" is styled and contains 3 small circles. This is the same place as issued token No. 23.



No. 30. Obv: inscription: LITHUANIA SONS AND DAUGHTERS HALL. within a dotted border. Rev: GOOD FOR 5¢ IN TRADE. 6-sided, bronze. 13 x 21 mm. This

Group was located at the Chicago Lithuanian Auditorium (still standing) on S. Halsted, in the Bridgeport section.

For unknown reasons Lithuanians called those tokens "čipsai". Evidently they borrowed that term from English "chips". Lithuanians as a rule are not gamblers, and such "animal" like chips didn't exist in Lithuania.

So much about those old Lithuanian "čipsai"-Tokens, as historical mementoes of those good old hard times in America 50 years ago.

But what a big difference is now! Now they are the owners of beautiful residences, churches, educational institutions, hospitals, wonderful resorts (Bachunas etc.), banking establishments, factories etc. Their children became doctors, engineers, financiers, journalists, lawyers, artists, professors, sportsmen etc. They gave America more than one million of loyal and creative citizens. Even such Lithuanian "pebbles" like Jack Sharkey, Jonny Goodman, Joe Wilman, Ed Beiner, Gish sisters, Tom Mix, Anna Kaskas, Polyna Stoska, Mrs. Winthrop Rockefeller, Prof. Zoethout (physiologist), Zeno Jasaitis (Chemist, atomic en.), Anton Nick-Nikunas (foremost Museum Cyclorapist), Victor D. Brenner (sculptor, who made U.S. Lincoln cent), etc., etc., etc. They all contributed their share in cementing and building the cultural and economic welfare of America.

*Dr. A. M. Račkus*

There you have it, readers. We hope you have enjoyed this series. This actual collection has been placed on permanent exhibit at the Balzekas museum in Chicago for all to see, when you visit. THE END.

The Lithuanian Numismatic Association  
P.O. Box 612  
Columbia, Maryland 21045

☐ **LAST ISSUE** for you  
if an "X" appears in this box.  
Please renew your subscription this week.

TO:

Russians put down?

Continued on page 8...

From the book: "NUMIZMATIKA" by Jonas K. Karys. Putnam, Conn. 1970. Pages 327-333.  
Letter translated into English by Val Matelis of Coral Gables, Florida (1979).

IN THE MATTER OF DR. RAČKUS "ŽINYNAS."

Mr. Stanley Balzekas, Jr.  
Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture  
4012 Archer Avenue  
CHICAGO, Illinois 60632

April 8, 1968

Highly Honored America's Lithuanian:

I have obtained your 1965 production of Dr. Alexander M. Račkus' "Augur (or Diviner) of Lithuania's Numismatics"--"Cyclopedia of Lithuanian Numismatics, Volume I," some time ago, and have repeatedly referred to that large, illustrated and beautifully bound volume, and studied its contents with the deepest attention.

The departed author was in truth honest, when he described this work in his introduction, "...a group of rough notes...with mud and chaff..." Truly, he crammed in between those hard, gilded covers a swarm of all types of "soft" items, with little or no absolute connection with the book's title; and numismatics itself is touched upon hardly at all. In addition, the Lithuanian portion of the book is written in such corrupt language, that it is difficult to realize that this is the work of an educated Lithuanian. Well, together with all other shortcomings of this book, there is closely connected its primitive "yellow" journalism.

I am not a bit surprised that no one up to the present has published a review of that "Žinynas." As is now probably clear to you, that good medical doctor once more demonstrated why one should not wander into an unknown field and how one must not write a book of scientific content. No one will direct serious attention to such books.

I would not even have written this letter to you if rumors had not circulated that you are preparing another volume of the book discussed here to issue as its sequel. And of course, this concerns me, though not directly. You see, it was my fate to work in the fallow field of Lithuanian numismatics for over 40 years, to study it carefully and methodically from its earliest beginnings to the present and to clarify it objectively. Therefore, I cannot remain entirely calm when someone blunders in, gropingly, blighting the subject matter itself and the reader, and misguiding the younger generation of students of our past. The chaff ruins the grain, and to write dilatorily of a science injures the national culture. It is the sacred duty of all enlightened persons (and so--of yours and my own, if you will permit me to join you) as much as we are able, to stand guard on our scientific works would be, in fact, scientific, that obscurantism should not be tolerated in specialists' works, that there should not be publicized untruths, and especially, idiocies.

I had met Dr. Račkus personally; I have been in the confines of his museum in Chicago. Among other things he has shown me one or two "very rare" numismatic rarities, but I best remember his "kapos" with such small round holes which could be drilled out only by one of our modern bits of the hardest steel.... While writing my own "Ancient Lithuanian Money" (this book you have in your museum) and later other numismatic studies. I became acquainted with Račkus' numismatic articles in the American and Lithuanian press; his book "The Goths" I read again just a week ago. It is really unpleasant to write this, but it is necessary; I became convinced and I am completely satisfied that this enlightened public figure, a fine medical physician, a

well-known newspaperman, HAS NOT UNDERSTOOD DEEPLY THE THEORY OF LITHUANIAN NUMISMATICS. He was an enthusiastic collector of coins, a so-called numismatic benefactor, but he was never a numismatist-scientist. That is most clearly evident in his referred to "Cyclopedia." But I will add for you another item or two.

1) In 1935, Dr. Račkus took over to Lithuania a plethora of antiques, among which was a fair-sized collection of numismatic items. All these he turned over to the state, with one of several conditions, that it (with the government's funds) would issue his numismatic articles, as I believe--those same, of which Volume I is here discussed. Račkus' transported material was placed in the Vytautas the Great Cultural Museum, and that same doctor was appointed Director of its historical section in the following year. In the 1941 Museum Annual (page 344) we read: "...Dr. Alexander Račkus did not show the ability to properly organize the historical section, in the opinion of the Museum authorities, so from the very beginning the section functioned with an erroneous policy....The section so organized became a storehouse of museum specimens...." And concerning Račkus' contributions to Lithuania of numismatic items I cite Vaclovas Biržiška's statements in his letter to me dated February 10, 1954, "...Yes, Dr. Račkus likes to call himself and to act as a numismatic specialist, but he is no specialist, but just a typical...American collector....That was clarified in Lithuania. He sold his 'numismatic collection' to our country at a very high price....To organize it, there was assigned P. Karazia, discoverer of the Vilnius Treasure....Having examined that collection, it became evident that a large part of Dr. Račkus' amassed varied 'rarities'--were pure fakes, which he himself was incompetent to recognize, believing them to be true coins...."

Dr. Račkus' numismatic writings were not published in Lithuania.

2) I found Dr. Račkus' article, "The Origin of the Kopeck" in the USA's numismatic magazine, "The Numismatist" Volume 43, 1930, almost entirely misrepresenting the established facts:

- a) There he mentions our first coin as of Vytautas, while it was Jogaila's; it was struck not in Gardinas but in Vilnius; not "about 1372", but after the wedding of Jogaila with Jadwiga;
- b) Neither the "castle" nor "personal signet of Vytautas the Great" can be found in those "kopecks" of Dr. Račkus, but the striking of the "Column Gate" (the symbol established by Gediminas as his identification) and the point of the spear;
- c) The other "kopecks" mentioned there were not struck "probably at Luck," but in Vilnius, and there are no "symbols of God's moon" on them, which the author contends very casually he found;
- d) The Cyrillic engraving "Pečat" coin is not a "Vytautas kopeck;"
- e) Not one of the coins described there was a "kopeck," as Dr. Račkus found them to be, --the designation "kopeck" came into use among the Russians much later, after the reforms of 1535, as well-informed numismatic specialists know from memory.

3) Similar errors and misconceptions have been made by Dr. Račkus in his article about the RUBEL (The Numismatist, Vol. 47, 1934), and in lengthy stories about Lithuanian money "in the era of Vytautas the Great," appearing in the American-Lithuanian press in 1930. But anyone who has read that same Račkus book, printed in 1929, "The Goths" must agree with the famous numismatist-scientist, George C. Miles, who states in his tremendous work, "The Coinage of the Visigoths," 1952, page 15 (short and to the point), "...Alexander M. Račkus, M.D., 'Guthones (the Goths), Kinsman of the Lithuanian People' ...a pseudo-scholarly work. For example (p. 190), the name Chindasvinth is rendered 'Aušvintas' on the basis of a misreading of the ligature employed for the first letters of his name on the coins. The specimens illustrated are mostly from sales catalogues, the majority of which I have been able to identify; the references to Heiss plates do not mean that the illustrations are from Heiss. Most of the weights appear to be fictitious." However, strangest of all, in that same book, our good doctor attempts to convince us that we are brothers to the Goths, while the Goth's money was not be any means Lithuanian money....While it is straight comedy, the way he abstracts the designation of schil-

ling (page 45); as is his stubborn avowal that "on the ancient coins of Lithuania we find 'Samogitia' (page 33), and Mindaugas' stamp (1242-1263) with a runic signature (page 418)...In connection with this product of Dr. Račkus, Dr. A. Šapoka wrote me in his letter of February 23, 1955: describing thus the book "Gudonus" and the description of Mindaugas' seal: "...it is the fruit of fantasy. Dr. Račkus, undoubtedly, is just a typical collector, with no critical faculty...."

4) At the same time it may be useful to remind you of Dr. Račkus' bold attempts in yet another field, new to him, namely--heraldry. In 1954, when a question arose concerning the coat of arms of the mother of Zygmantas Augustas' mother, Bona Sforza and Kiev, Dr. Račkus with a voice of authority declared in print that:

- a) In the first coat of arms, "a crowned dragon is swallowing a girl," although the child's feet and the entire lower part of its body up to its underarms are in the dragon's jaws, so that no one except our physician, has facts from which to judge the sex (and the renowned European heraldist, J. Siebmacher, as did I, hold that dragon's victim to be a "child," that is, "general sex.");
- b) In the second coat of arms, with no explanation, he combines the Kiev bear with the Samogitian bear, though anyone fairly familiar with heraldry would have found the differences between the two bears so clear, as are the differences between all other bears portrayed on coats of arms, whether they be from Kulm, Novogard, Berlin, some of the Swiss cantons, or even the former Republic of California, or the personal arms of Russian leaders (for example, Gagarin, Galicin, Lvov, or Prozorovski);

5) In Vol. 8, page 400 of the Lithuanian Encyclopedia, Dr. Račkus published his article, "The Long Grosch" or "hammered." It is regretted that I, as editor of the numismatic section failed to examine this article. It would not have appeared as it is. I blame the editor of the volumes since he should have shown it to me but failed to do so. Among other misstatements in that document, I will mention to you the most blatant inanities:

- a) With absolutely no foundation Račkus terms our historical "kupas" "Long Grosches" or "hammered coins," since during the circulation of the "kupas", the idea of the grosch (either the word or the thing) did not exist, and learned numismatists know that the idea appeared in our country and was fitted into our historical currency only in the 14th century, when the olden kupa was being eliminated from use by more modern coins, tied in with monetary bonds with the Czech's "Grosch of Prague," the groat then current;
- b) The "kupa" was neither a "hammered" coin nor a "grinva," as Dr. Račkus designates them additionally,--"hammered" he attaches with no reason, since the "kupa" was a molded coin, while in Lithuania only the more substantial coins (talers, guldens) were hammered, and among them our own "half-kupas" of the 16th century (containing 30 silver grosches). Those large coins were so named even into the 18th and 19th centuries when the molded "kupa" had long been forgotten. The "grinva"--derived by some of our unexpected "patriots" and made into Lithuanian from the Russian "grivna," should never have been done! Historically we had the "kupa," later the "long kupa," just as the Russians, following our example, had the "grivna" and the rubel. The relationship--only in similarity;

6) The coins of Kęstutis and Vytautas, Dr. Račkus contends and names "skatikas," deriving the word "skatikas" from the Prussian "skoteri." In truth:

- a) All those early coins of our Lithuania Dukes were called by the populace, "little moneys;" later, they acquired citizenship as "denars;"
- b) "Skatikas" cannot be derived from "skoter"--since the latter was not a coin, but a standard type of evaluating money; since only a half-skoter and a quarter skoter were ever issued as coins; even they had names of their own, far removed from Dr. Račkus' "skatikas"--"Halfskoter" and "a quarter."

7) The numismatic collection which Dr. Račkus turned over to Lithuania has cre-

ated many problems for the directorate of the Museum of Vytautas the Great. Especially the descriptions of the numismatic items. A lengthy correspondence describing one Roman coin illustrates once again that Dr. Račkus always had more intensity, fantasy and resoluteness than information or experience. In this particular case his bronze coin of Valusian, as he describes it from its initials, was issued for the occupied colonies of the Romans and is likewise directed to the Galindas, a Lithuanian people. Professor E. Volter, an archeologist, strongly suspects such nonsense of Račkus explains something else entirely, scientifically: "Dr. Račkus, erroneously interpreted the abbreviations"; Koenigsberg, University Professor Lenze confirms Volter's statement by document (See "The Past," I, Kaunas, 1930).

8) In "Our Country's Past," I, 2, 1960, Dr. Račkus published his article about our outstanding symbol, "Columns of the Gates," terming that symbol a coat-of-arms of the "Castle Gates." Attempting to analyze the derivation of the coat of arms of "Castle Gate," the author has there beaten up whatever he could lay his hands on, a handful of history, numismatics, heraldry, geography and archeology, linguistics, etc...but he was unable to produce anything of real merit: neither the root of the coat of arms of the "Castle Gates," nor the theme's related subjects ("Lithuanian bracteats," the "Capital of Mindaugas," "the first Catholic cathedral"....) did not forward the author's attention any further. The one affirmation of Dr. Račkus, that "Mindaugas truly prided himself of two things: his building of the first Catholic Cathedral in Lithuania, and the second, his castle "Voruta" testifies to us what value his article has scientifically. How did the doctor know on what Mindaugas "prided himself," and how could he picture on a Christmas card in 1958 this "Cathedral of Mindaugas," if no one to the present day has found any authentic remains of such a Cathedral nor has anyone succeeded in finding the location of "Voruta" or any other location--Mindaugas capital--where it might have been? Dr. John Matusas had this to say about this "study" of Račkus, in the December 3, 1960 issue of the "Draugas": "...The cited material is not always relevant, and often unconvincing... in writing anything original, one must always be careful, must rest on the very earliest sources...must differentiate photographs from sketches, which we do not find with Dr. Račkus. An historian...soon finds what is scientific analysis and what is simplification or dialecticism.

9) The December 1929 issue of the "Numismatist" carried Dr. Račkus' report entitled, "Twentieth Anniversary of the Lincoln Cent," which he had earlier read at a meeting. There the author speaking only very briefly about the theme, the cent, directed all his attention to the cent's engraver, transforming the Jewish Victor David Brenner, born in Lithuania, into a true Lithuanian. "Mr. Brenner was born in the big town of Šiauliai, Lithuania..by birth, ethnologically, and geographically, Brenner belonged to Lithuania...", Račkus supported his attempt to make a Lithuanian out of a Jew. But all that was not enough, at least to the author himself, and he tendered a "startling" alas, again a pipe dream, "new idea:" Do you know that his real name was Viktoras Baranauskas?"....And "Baranauskas" Dr. Račkus could not fulfill this plan--Baranauskas reminded him of the surname of another Jew, Šachnauskas. And in another "operation," Račkus "perpetuated" Brenner, now without a doubt a "Lithuanian," transferred to him the surname of the famous Lithuanian Bishop, BARANAUSKAS. You may notice among other things this on that same Račkus' printed envelopes issued in 1959, which are even now seen in Chicago. Dr. Račkus degraded himself even lower in the "Lithuanian Brenner-Baranauskas" matter, in his latest "Žinynas," page 27, listing the "numismatic pioneers and supporters in Lithuania," among the "more famous numismatists" he included "Dovas Baranauskas," adding that "he is the father of the famous sculptor, Viktoras D. Brenner-Baranauskas, who created the U.S. Lincoln Cent...." What an unqualified absurdity!! The creator of the Lincoln cent was Brenner; he used no other surname anywhere; his father, again as a Jew, was George Brenner, and not Dovas Baranauskas, and no one, excepting Chicago's physician Račkus, ever considered that Brenner was one of the "more famous numismatists" not even an ordinary numismatist.

And et cetera, et cetera. You cannot explain everything in a letter.

Having found myself in the United States of America, I attempted to convince Dr. Račkus to forego his fantasies in one or two letters I touched on subjects upon which we had diametrically opposing opinions, but his replies were always short: "I have been and am taken up with important works...." and the like; or he failed to reply at all. As I can see from his "Žinynas," about which I began this letter and will end it, neither our personal talks nor my letters could either bend or break the good doctor's "line." If you in fact are preparing to issue more of Dr. Račkus' numismatic writings, in the name of science and Lithuanian culture, I sincerely request of you:

- a) Direct particular attention of the publisher to these my short comments; and
- b) Draw carefully the necessary and fitting conclusions.

And forgive me this type of intrusion which I personally hold to be my unavoidable duty.

Pleasant spring holidays and success in work for Lithuania!

Highly honoring you,

Jonas K. Karys

**RAČKUS, Aleksandras** (1893-1965), physician and numismatist, born in Čekiškė, county of Kaunas, on April 7, 1893. Coming to the United States in 1910, he studied at St. Laurent College (Quebec, Canada), Holy Cross College (Worcester, Massachusetts), Loyola University in Chicago and Chicago Medical School where he gained his doctorate in surgery in 1922. He practiced medicine in Chicago (1922-32) and in Kaunas, Lithuania (1934-40), where he also served as physician with the Legation of the United States. For more than 40 years he was a columnist on health matters for the daily *Draugas* (The Friend), published in Chicago.

While studying at St. Laurent College, Račkus was employed at the Quebec City Museum and became interested in numismatics, his second vocation. He established a museum of Lithuanian numismatics and history in Chicago in 1917 and amassed coins as well as items characteristic to the life of the Lithuanian-Americans. His Lithuanian numismatic collection became the largest in the world and included unique specimens. Invited by the Lithuanian government, he organized an exhibition at Kaunas University during the Lithuanian World Congress of 1935. Subsequently, the Lithuanian Ministry of Education acquired all of the exhibits (some 80,000 units) for the Museum of Culture, thus establishing the foundation of the historic section, which Račkus headed from 1936 to 1938. Following the Russian occupation of Lithuania, he returned to Chicago in 1940 and continued collecting numismatic, archaeological, ethnographic and historic materials. After his death on Oct. 9, 1965, his collection and library were taken over by the Balzekas Museum.

Račkus belonged to several numis-

matic societies and contributed articles to the magazine *The Numismatist*, among them "Medal Commemorating the Independence of Lithuania" (1920), "Amber as a Medium of Exchange" (1921), "Twentieth Anniversary of the Lincoln Cent" (1929), "Origin of the Ruble in Lithuania and Russia" (1934), and others. He published articles on history in Lithuanian periodicals and the book *Gu-*

*thones (The Goths), Kinsmen of the Lithuanian People* (1929), attempting to prove that the Goths and their rulers were related to the Lithuanians. The government of Lithuania awarded him the Order of Vytautas the Great for his contributions to Lithuanian culture.

Bibl.: J. Karys. *Numizmatika*, Bridgeport, Connecticut, 1970. J.P.



Dr. Alexander M. Račkus 1893-1965  
(1936 photo)

## THE LONDON MINT RECORDS OF 1925

The London Mint Records, thought to have been destroyed during World War II, surfaced in the 1960's. In these records were the official detailed work orders for Lithuania's three silver coins of 1925: 1 lit, 2 lits, and 5 lits. The financial figures' conversion and translating into U.S. dollars was done by L.N.A. member John Glynn of London, England.

The financial figures presented here are based upon the Whittaker Almanack of 1926 which states the average British pound (L) equalled U.S. \$4.80 in 1925. The figures presented in British pounds (L) are exactly those in the mint records and appear first. Those figures presented second column are converted into U.S. dollars of 1925 using the L figure for our convenience of understanding. To figure how many Lithuanian lits it cost, simply move the decimal place of the U.S. dollar figure to the right one place, since the Lithuanian lit at that time had a value of 10¢ U.S. (Example: \$671.20 would be 6,712.0 Lithuanian lits.) Although the figures seem rather low in cost compared to today's prices, keep in mind this is what the record states--we only reprint the record "as is" here (plus convert into U.S.) and make no attempt to reconcile figures. No doubt these records are just a portion of the total records needed and used in 1925, since the London Mint also supervised the aluminum/bronze coin minting by the King's Norton Mint in Birmingham. Perhaps more records will surface in the future.

The British figures presented are in three columns: Pounds (L), Shillings (/) and Pence (-/). For example, 5 pounds, 6 shillings, 7 pence is written as this: L 5. 6. 7.; if it were 6 shillings and 7 pence only, it will be written as this: 6/7. There are 12 pence to a shilling, which then takes 20 shillings to make a pound. If you compare it in pence, it would be 240 pence (12 pence X 20 shillings). A pence is the same as U.S. 2¢.

NOTE: The melting, rolling, cutting press room and weighing are all separate sections and show the entire cost of their separate sections. The total is then carried on to the next section, adding the two totals together and so on until you come to the last section and you will notice the final cost of the entire operation.

\* \* \* \*

### Public Record Office.

MINT 13 174 Y/K 5899

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### Lithuania-----5 Lits

September, 1925

Work Order/ c.f. #18.

| MELTING<br>DEPARTMENT             |                           | <u>U.S. Dollars</u> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Wages                             | : L 54. 3. 10.            | 260.12              |
| On Cost                           |                           |                     |
| Overhead                          | : L281. 0. 10.            | 1349.00             |
| Total                             | : L335. 4. 8. (335.23333) | 1609.00             |
| On Cost rate: 8/4 (\$2) per hour. |                           |                     |
| Bars produced: 850,991.80 ounces. |                           |                     |
| Value of bars per 1,000 ounces:   | L .39393                  | \$1.68085           |

( To be continued. )